THE

RAPE

OF

PROSERPINE:

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

Written by Mr. THEOBALD.

AND

Set to Muſick by Mr. GALLIARD.

Nunc Dea, regnorum Numen commune duorum,
Cum Matre eſt totidem, totidem cum Conjuge menſes.

OVID.

LONDON:

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MDCCXXVII.

[Price One Shilling.

THE

TO

THOMAS CHAMBER, *Esq*;

SIR,

THOUGH my Inclination to Musick frequently leads me to visit the *Italian* Opera; yet, I confess, it is not in the Power of the present Excellent Performers to prevent my falling into the very common Opinion, that there are many essential Requisites still wanting, to establish that Entertainment on a lasting Foundation, and adapt it to the Taste of an *English* Audience.

For not to mention the trite Objection of the Performances being in *Italian*, and the general ill Choice of the Subjects for thoſe Compoſitions; it is evident, that the vaſt Expence of procuring Foreign Voices, does neceſſarily exclude thoſe various Embelliſhments of Machinery, Painting, Dances, as well as Poetry it ſelf, which have been always eſteemed (except till very lately in *England*) Auxiliaries abſolutely neceſſary to the Succeſs of Muſick; and, without which, it cannot be long ſupported, unleſs by very great Subſcriptions, of which we naturally grow tired in a few Years.

It ſeems, therefore, the only Way by which Muſick can be eſtabliſh'd in *England*, is to give it thoſe Aſſiſtances from other Arts which it yet wants, and by that Means to adapt it ſtill more to the Publick Taſte; to moderate, as much as poſſible, the Expence of

of it, and thereby to make it a general Diverſion, which hitherto it has not been.

You will perceive, Sir, that in the following Entertainment, the Vocal Parts of which are here preſented to you, I have endeavoured to introduce that Variety, which has uſually been thought agreeable on the Stage; and have attempted to form the ſerious Part of it upon the abovementioned Plan, as a Specimen of what may not be diſpleaſing to an *Engliſh* Audience, and from which the Town may be able to form a Judgment of the Effect an Opera wou'd have, if conducted (by an abler Hand) in the ſame Manner.

As for the other Parts, it might, perhaps, ſeem an Affectation in me to detain you with the Hiſtory of the antient *Pantomime* Entertainments, or to make a long Apology for the Revival of them at preſent. Thus much, however, may be ſaid in their Favour,

that

that this Theatre has of late ow'd its Support in great Meaſure to them. I own my ſelf extremely indebted to the Favour with which the Town is pleas'd to receive my Attempts to entertain them in this Kind; and do engage, for my own Part, that whenever the Publick Taſte ſhall be diſpoſed to return to the Works of the *Drama*, no one ſhall rejoice more ſincerely than my ſelf.

In the mean Time, Sir, give me Leave to recommend all my Part in this Work (the Deſign of it) to your Favour and Protection: It is, indeed, rightfully yours, having been born in your Family, where amidſt many other Pleaſures of an eaſy and agreeable Friendſhip, I found my ſelf at Leiſure to project and perfect the whole Plan; and cou'd not then forbear recommending to my Friend Mr. *Lambert*, to borrow the Deſign of two Scenes, (the

Gardens

Gardens of *Ceres*, and the Solitude) in the following Entertainment, from your own moſt delightful Garden at *Hanworth*: How well he has ſucceeded is needleſs for me to ſay; for without the modern Affectation of putting his Name in the Play-Bills, I doubt not but the Publick will diſtinguiſh, and do Juſtice to ſo early and fine a Genius. Permit me, Sir, to conclude this Addreſs, by wiſhing you all poſſible Happineſs, by begging the Continuance of your Friendſhip and Favour, and by aſſuring you that I am,

Lincoln's-Inn Fields,
Feb. 10, 1726.

SIR,

Your moſt obliged,

And moſt faithful

Humble Servant,

J. RICH.

Vocal Characters.

MEN.

JUPITER,	Mr. *Rochetti.*
PLUTO,	Mr. *Leveridge.*
MERCURY,	Mr. *Laguerre.*

WOMEN.

CERES,	Mrs. *Barbier.*
PROSERPINE,	Mrs. *Chambers.*
CYANA,	Mrs. *Warren.*

Infernal Voice,
Gods of the Woods.
Nymphs attending PROSERPINE and CERES.
Sicilians.
Infernal Spirits attending PLUTO.
Shades.

CHORUS.

SCENE, in Sicily.

THE RAPE OF PROSERPINE.

SCENE I.

The Gardens of Ceres, *with the Palace at a Diſtance.*

CERES, ARETHUSA, *and* CYANA.

CERES.

O Bleſt Retreat! O bliſsful Bow'rs!
Ye ſunny Hills! and verdant Glades!
Warbling Choirs, and murm'ring Springs!
Here, midſt your Sweets, in full Content I reign,
Nor envy *Juno* on her ſtarry Throne. ——

Quick, *Arethuſa*, fly,
Aſſemble all my Sylvan Train,
To raiſe a Trophy to victorious *Jove*.
[*Exit* Arethuſa.
The raſh, rebellious Sons of Earth,
Whoſe giant and preſumptuous Pride,
With Mountains piled on Mountains Heads,
Thought to have ſcaled his Heaven,
His mighty Arm has quell'd: And now,
Deep in the Centre, grov'ling and ſubdued,
They lie the Monuments of Wrath divine.

Let Harmony ſweetly reſounding,
Gay Pleaſure and Tranſport invite;

Till the Voice in loud Ecchoes rebounding,
Thro' the Vallies diffuſe our Delight.
Let Harmony, &c.

SCENE II.

MERCURY *flies down to* CERES.

Cer. Hermes! What unexpected Charge
Can to theſe humble Manſions bring
The Meſſenger of *Jove?*
Mer. Bright *Ceres*, from th' eternal Throne
In Embaſſy I come:
He, who aſſembled Gods commands,

Here

Here drops his Pow'r, and ſues to thee.

Cer. What Grace can I confer to pleaſe
Him, whom Earth fears, and Heavens obey?

Mer. While his all-ſeeing Eye with Joy
Beholds theſe Plains inrich'd by thee;
He mourns the barren *Phrygia*'s Fate,
Whoſe Soil no golden Harveſts crown.
To their Diſtreſs his Mercy yields;
The God implores, that *Ceres* too
Inſtant will pity, and aſſiſt their Toil.

Cer. When I reflect how once he lov'd,
Tho' all his Vows are now forgot,
Yet for my *Proſerpine*,
The dear-lov'd Offspring of our Joys,
Jove cannot ask in vain.
No, ——— ſay to your eternal King,
Ceres obeys, and *Phrygia*'s bleſt.

Mer. I fly the pleaſing Sounds to bear,
Which, well I know, will ſooth his Soul,
And kindle up returning Love.

Again the God ſhall wooe thee,
And languiſh in thy Arms;

Who gazes muſt purſue thee:
So pointed are thy Charms.

Again the God, &c.

[Mercury *flies up.*

SCENE III.

CERES *and* CYANA.

Cer. Phrygia, I come thy Soil to bleſs,
And cheer thy lab'ring Swains. —— *Cyana*,
Bind the wing'd Dragons to my Carr;
My Flight demands the Lightning's Speed.
[*Exit* Cyana.
O *Proſerpine!* my Child! ten Thouſand (Fears,
While thy defenceleſs Youth I leave,
Croud to my throbbing Breaſt;
And give me all a Mother's Pains.
[*Exit* Ceres.

SCENE, *A Farm-Yard.*

The Groteſque Part begins.

SCENE

SCENE IV. Ceres's *Palace.*

Enter Proſerpine, *accompany'd with the Nymphs of the Train of* Ceres, *and perform an Entry; during which* Ceres *appears in the Air in her Chariot drawn by Dragons.*

Cer. Well have you done, my faithful Train,
Go on to celebrate th' important Day.
Eternal *Jove*, the Victor God,
Has hurl'd Deſtruction and Diſmay
On his rebellious Foes.
Raiſe the big Trophy to his Name,
Sound every Inſtrument of Joy,
And with briſk Meaſures beat the Ground:
'Till Earth and Air grow ſenſible
Of your Applauſe, and his Renown.
But, midſt the Triumphs of your Mirth,
Remember, to your Charge I leave
All that a Mother's Breaſt holds dear:
To you, and to the Gods,
I truſt my darling *Proſerpine.*

[Ceres *flies off.*

Proſ.

Proſ. See! ſee! aloft, advanc'd in Air,
She rides upon the Clouds.

Swift the Moments wanton round,
While with circling Bleſſings crown'd;
But ſlow they move when Pleaſures ceaſe.
Fly, ye gloomy Hours of Anguiſh,
Bring her back for whom I languiſh,
And reſtore my Breaſt to Peace.
Swift the, &c.

Let's haſte the ſolemn Dance to tread;
With Spoils of War the Trophy deck;
And execute her royal Will.

[*The Nymphs renew their Dance, and erect a Trophy, in honour to* Jupiter, *that is form'd of the Spoils of the Giants whom* Jupiter *overcame. An Earthquake is felt, and part of the Building falls; and through the Ruins of the fall'n Palace Mount* Ætna *appears, and emits Flames. Beneath, a Giant is ſeen to riſe, but is daſh'd to pieces by a Thunder-bolt hurld from* Jupiter.

Ye

Ye dreadful Powers, what means this Change?
Why all this Pomp of Horror?
Fear and Amazement ſhake my Soul!

[*Exeunt* Proſerpine *and Train.*

SCENE, *A Country-houſe.*

The Groteſque Part continued.

SCENE V. *An open Country with Corn-fields.*

Enter PLUTO, *attended by Infernals.*

Plu. My Soul's on fire—Flames, hot as thoſe
Which ſcorch the Dæmons in my Realms below,
Burn up my Breaſt, and rob me of Repoſe.
O *Proſerpine!* I bend beneath thy Power;
Oft to theſe Vales the Charmer ſteals,
And, pleas'd to weave the Chaplet for her Brow,
With roſy Fingers plucks the breathing Flowers,
Leſs fragrant than her ſelf.

Flights

Flights of Cupids *hover round me,*
Spread your little ſubtle Snares;

Beauty found the Force to wound me,
Beauty muſt relieve my Cares.

Flights of, &c.

[A Dance of Dæmons.

But, ſee, ſhe comes.
Inſtant be gone; —I'll too retire;

[*Exeunt* Infernals.

And watch a Moment may aſſiſt my Joy.

[Pluto *ſhades himſelf behind a Tree.*

Enter Proſerpine *and Nymphs.*

Proſ. Content and Bliſs ſerene dwell here,
Safe from the Pains the Wretches feel,
Who pine with Love's fantaſtick Chains.
Haſte, ſee the Flowers luxuriant riſe;
And court your Hands to crop their ſwelling Odours.

[*All Nymphs but* Cyana *diſperſe themſelves.*

[Pluto *advancing, ſeizes* Proſerpine.

Protect, me Heaven!

Plu.

Plu. You pray in vain.
The Heavens conſenting doom you mine.
Proſ. Is there no Aid? —*Plu.* None.
(*Proſ.* O my Fears!
Plu. Be gone, bold Nymph; if you give
(Breath
To what you here behold,
Eternal Dumbneſs is your Curſe.
Proſ. I'm loſt; protect me, Heaven!

[*The Earth opens, and* Pluto's *Chariot riſes; he forces* Proſerpine *into it: All but* Cyana *ſink.*

Ceres *deſcends in her Chariot.*

Cer. The *Phrygian* Soil, as *Jove* enjoin'd,
Reaps the full Bleſſings of my Power,
And Plenty-giving Hand. Each Altar ſmokes
To *Ceres'* Name, and gladden'd Crowds
Send up their Vows to *Jove* and Me,
In grateful Sacrifice of Praiſe.
For this my Boſom glows with Joy,
But more for my Return to Thee,
O much-lov'd *Proſerpine!*—My Nymphs,—
[Cyana *and Nymphs enter.*
Ha! wherefore ſhun you thus my Eyes?
Where is my *Proſerpine?* In Tears!

O my foreboding Heart! —— *Cyana*, quick,
Reſolve my doubting Soul.
Cya. O *Ceres*, ——

[*Offering to ſpeak, is turn'd into a Brook.*

Cer. Ha! ſurprizing Change!
What mean the envious Gods?
Muſt I my darling Offspring loſe,
Yet be deny'd to know what Fate
Has robb'd me of ſo dear a Prize?
Have I for this Reward, O *Jove*,
Enrich'd the lean and barren Earth,
And with my Harveſts bought thee Praiſe?
But I'll reſume the Gifts conferr'd;
Rage on the Wings of Fire ſhall ride,
And flaming Ruin cover every Plain.

Riſe, ye Flames, and blaze around me;
Haſte, and arm each deadly Hand:
Lift up the conſuming Brand,
And the guilty World deſtroy.
Riſe ye Flames, &c.

[*The Gods of the Woods enter and take the Part of* Ceres, *and break the Trees; the People of* Sicily *enter and oppoſe 'em.*

Sic.

Sic. O, ſacred *Ceres*, ſpare the Land,
Nor thy own Gifts in Rage deſtroy.

Cer. *Pity, nor Remorſe ſhall wound me,*
Vengeance now is all my Joy.
Pity nor, &c.

[Ceres *here ſnatches flaming Branches from her Train, and ſets the Corn, &c. on fire.*

SCENE, *The Side of a Wood.*

The Actions of Harlequin *continued.*

SCENE VI. *The* Elysian *Fields.*

Enter PROSERPINE *and several Shades, who range themselves on each Side the Stage.*

Pros. *O anxious State,*
Restore me, Fate,
To Ceres' *Arms, and* Enna's *Plains.*

O Liberty,
I sigh for thee;
Empire compell'd is worse than Chains.
O anxious, &c.

But, see, the Tyrant that usurps my Love.

Enter PLUTO.

Plu. *Let Torture cease, and Plaints of Woe,*
Suspended be Despair.
Why still this Gloom?
Pros. It suits my Fate.
Joy dwells not in these Realms.

Plu.

Plu. So ſullen Grief perſwades; but know,
We have our Triumphs here.
Come, baniſh Care; let Beauty ſmile,
Hell ſhall be gay to greet its Queen.
[*Takes her by the Hand, ſtamps,*
Scene opens.

Pluto *enters Hell with* Proſerpine.
The Shades retire.

SCENE, *A Chamber.*

The Groteſque Part continued.

SCENE, *A Solitude.*

Enter Ceres.

Cer. O Power of Grief! that can'ſt transform
Things which the Mind ſerene thought fair;
Making the ſick and troubled Senſe
Loath Nature in her choiceſt Gifts.
The Woods, the Springs, the feather'd Choirs,
The flow'ry Mountains, verdant Dales,
The rowling Skies, and gaudy Sun,

That,

That, whilſt I knew the Taſte of Joy,
All miniſtred Delight;
Are Objects of Diſcomfort now:
When I reflect Theſe once I view'd,
And once was bleſt: But 'tis my Curſe,
O *Proſerpine*, in loſing thee,
That, as eternal is my State,
Such muſt be too my Woe.

O Sleep, kind God, thou Friend to Sorrow,
Come, bind me in thy peaceful Chains.

From thee alone the Wretch can borrow,
A ſhort Releaſe from laſting Pains.
O Sleep, &c.

[*A Noiſe under the Stage.*

What horrid Sound invades my Ear?
Inf. Voice. Let univerſal Order die,
And Nature ſink into the Grave of Ruin.
Cer. Well do th' infernal Powers adviſe,
Let Order ceaſe, let Nature die,
And Ruin all the World o'erwhelm.
[Mercury *deſcends.*
Mer. Ceres, the Voice of your Diſtreſs
Pierces the Heavens, and every God
Is anxious for the Pains you feel.
Therefore

Therefore let Joy, let gay Delight,
Laugh in thy Eyes, and ſmooth thy Brow.

Fortune often wooes us,
Oft with Smiles purſues us,
When we leaſt ſuſpect her kind.

Delights again ſhall meet thee,
Lo! Pleaſures wait to greet thee,
Give all Sorrow to the Wind.
Fortune often, &c.

Cer. Fate cannot cure my Woes.
Mer. Fate will redreſs your Griefs,
The darling Child, whoſe Doom you mourn,
Now ſhares Imperial *Pluto*'s Throne;
Behold, th' aſſembled Gods on *Hymen* wait,
The mighty Nuptials to proclaim.

[*The Heavens open, and diſcover* Jupiter *attended by Celeſtial Deities; the Earth opens, and* Pluto *and* Proſerpine *riſe as from Hell, attended by Infernals, at which the Followers of* Ceres *enter in a Fright.*

Jup. Hear, *Ceres*, what th' indulgent Fates,
T' aſſwage a Mother's Pains, decree.
Six Moons in each revolving Year
Shall *Proſerpine*, to Day reſtor'd,
In filial Duty ſpend her Hours:
And only half her Time employ
To chear her royal Conſort's Eyes,
Remains there ought that *Jove* can do
To wipe Complaints and Tears away?

O Goddeſs, chear thoſe beauteous Eyes,
In all your Griefs I ſhare:

My Power and Empire I deſpiſe,
While you a Sorrow bear.
O Goddeſs, &c.

Cer. Oh, I am vanquiſh'd,
And have no more to ask of Fate.
Jup. Then War and Diſcord ſhall no more
Rend the divided Univerſe.
But Heaven, and Earth, and Hell unite
In triple League of laſting Peace.
Yet leaſt theſe Plains
Remind thee of thy Daughter loſt,
And wound thy Heart anew,
Henceforth in *Albion*'s Iſle reſide;

A Clime,

A Clime, of old, doom'd to become
The Seat of Beauty, and the Soil of Heroes.

[Ceres *gives* Proſerpine *to* Pluto.

[*Enter ſeveral Dancers, who repreſent the four Elements, and celebrate the Marriage of* Pluto *and* Proſerpine, *by a Grand Ballet.*

CHORUS.

Albion, *the Queen of Nations grow,*
Thy Fortune to thy Vertues owe.
With Plenty ſhall thy Earth be crown'd,
And Jove *ſhall make thy Kings renown'd.*

FINIS.

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